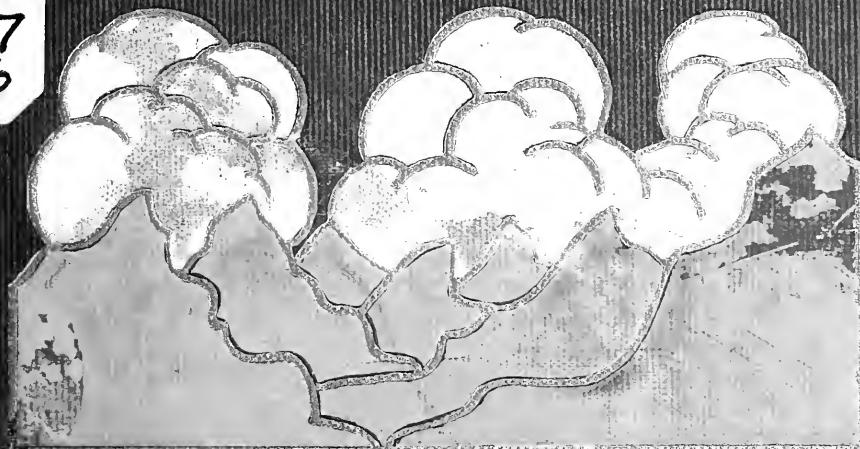


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The
ISLANDS of
the BLEST
George Brewster Gallup



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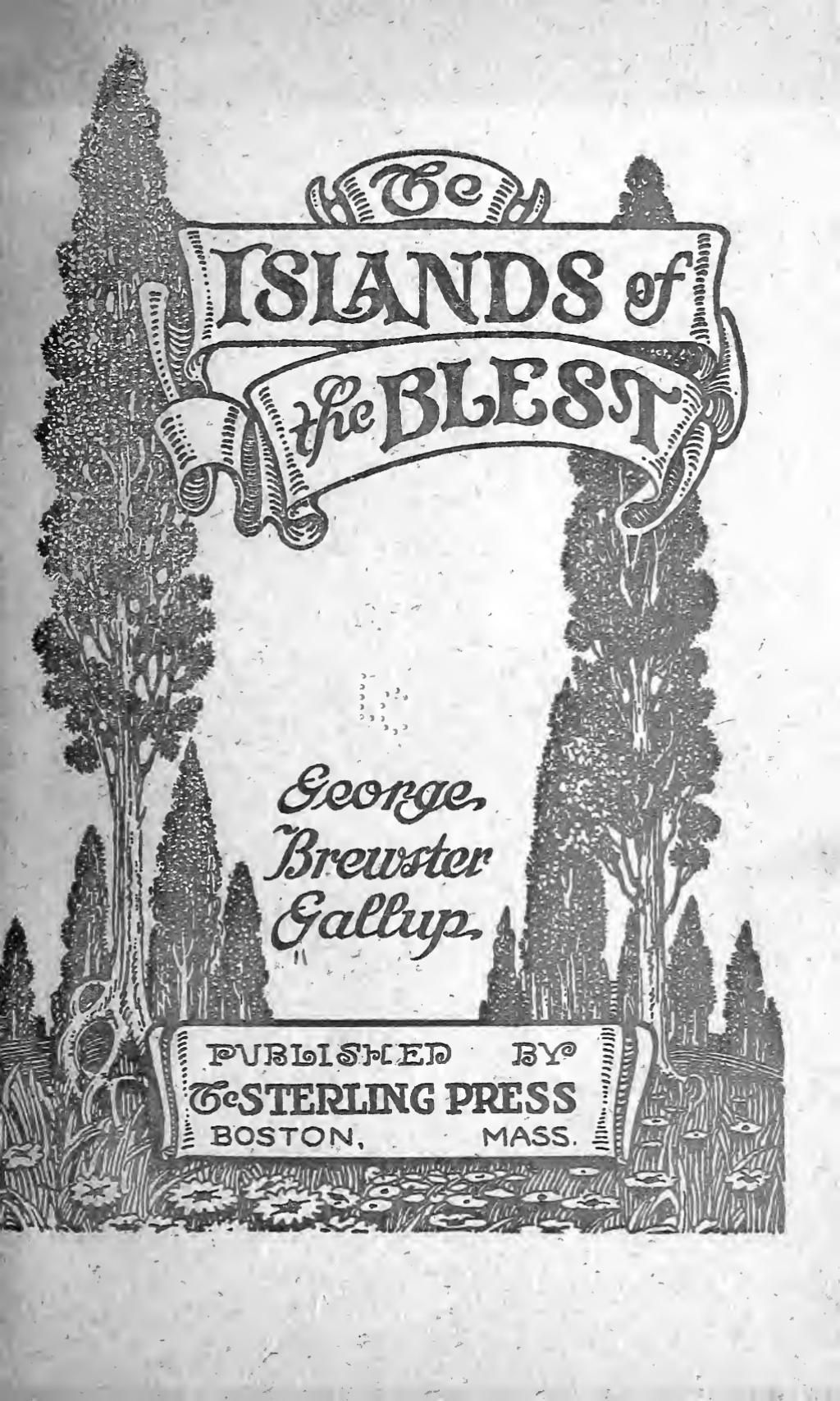
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THE ISLANDS OF THE BLEST
AND OTHER POEMS





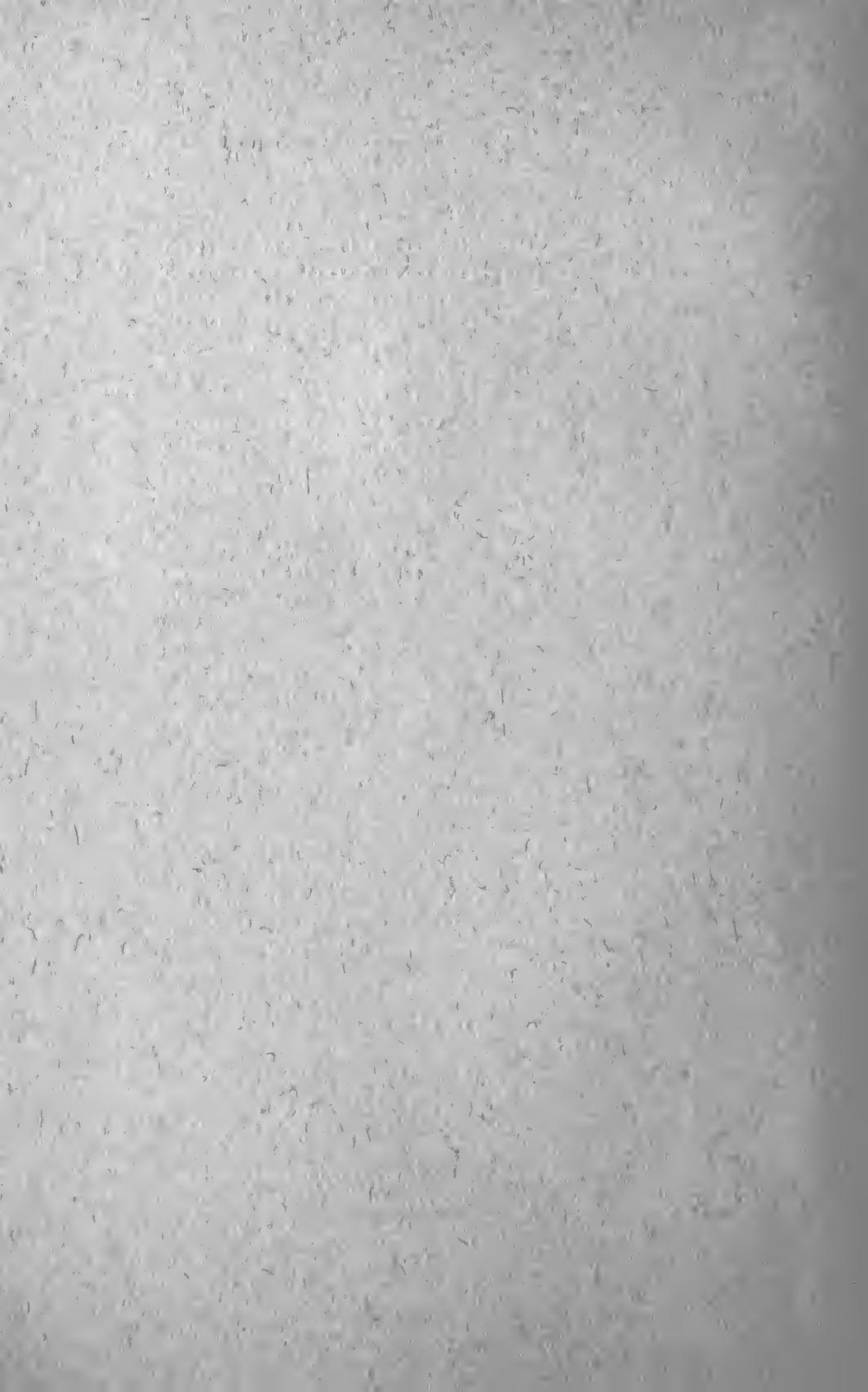
ISLANDS of
the BLESS

George,
Brewster
Gallup,

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INTRODUCTION

In the life of every human being unexplained influences play a mighty part. For some, mysticism exerts an unreasoning force, but leaves apparently no real impress except to increase superstition. Others see in the very mention of the word mystic a return to the alchemy and necromancy of old, stripped, possibly, of some of the elements of mechanical mystery which formerly gave them prestige.

But as always in transitional epochs, there is, today, a recrudescence of the magical, of which abnormal manifestations are to be avoided. Science, however, clears the way for sane questioning of the abtruse. So the mystic touches in life are not for scoffers, the superstitious and disciples of the occult, alone.

Increasing multitudes, drifting from former cherished beliefs, feel in the progress of human life the influence of a Divine Providence, whose directions are so little understood that they are for the most part characterized as the workings of luck or chance.

These influences, trifles they may seem, barely brushing the consciousness of the susceptible, may be followed or ignored. Can they be sought, invited and followed today as in prophetic times of old?

In "The Islands of the Blest" and other poems Mr. Gallup gives glimpses of his idea of life's mystery, in hints and light flashes like the records of what we are wont to call intuition.

He does not pretend to know what the mystery is or how others should interpret their own mystic experiences, nor to describe his views didactically. Faith that humanity is being guided; that we are all under Divine guidance, if we will only take heed to see and recognize, leads him to urge obedience to the dictates of an inner conscience which leads irresistibly to a better life.

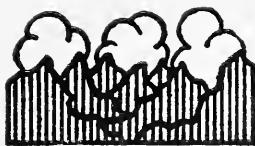
All this is not said in so many words, except, perhaps, in his latest poem, "Oracles."

For the most part Mr. Gallup's poems are the songs of an optimist. Many of the lyrics have been published in magazines, and two were winners in poetical competitions.

Less than half a dozen of the poems have been written recently. Mr. Gallup has been engaged in other forms of expression, public speaking, economic and civic lectures, prose essays, and talks upon City Planning. The poems which appear in this little volume represent the gleanings from an active life, devoted to helping to better the conditions under which mankind lives.

JOHN RANDALL CHILD.

Boston, Oct. 4, 1916.



Seven mystic peaks,-
And three clouds wondrous magical.
There souls wing lanes of bliss
Mid chords of splendour.
'Tis thither mortals win
Through thunderous sad seas tragical,-
And thence stream mysteries
And visions, veiled at Endor.

THE ISLANDS OF THE BLEST

SOMEWHERE!

O, is it in the Northern Sea,
Or Southern Sea,
Or may in Eastern sun-bounds be
The happy spot?
Where mystic circling sea-lines flee
The land forgot.
Where wave-wall girt, and strewn amid
Foam-ramparts, linger summer-hid
The Islands of the Blest.

Somewhere!

Yet where no mortal e're may know;
Yet winds may know,
And stars may know;
And fleeting phantom clouds may go,
Kissing the domes;
Or where the radiant sun-spanned bow,
A-skyward roams,
The rain-god builds his bridge and tries
The wind-swept arch to whither rise,
The Islands of the Blest.

Somewhere!

But where, no wind hath ever told;
Nor star hath told,
Nor cloud hath told,
Where lie aflame with sea-fret gold
The palaced heights,
And rose-strewn plains, whose joys enfold
Elysian sights,
Where swing in dreamful splendor locked,
In deeps whose depths are pleasure rocked,
The Islands of the Blest.

Somewhere!
O, is it Hesperus beneath,
Or Northern Crown beneath,
Or Southern Cross beneath;
Or doth the morn with sun-lock wreath
The purple hills?
Perhaps the glows that westward seethe
When Phoebus thrills,
Touching the foam-flecked chalice to his lip,
Are flashed, where flame at golden summit-tip,
The Islands of the Blest.

THE IMPULSE ABORIGINAL

A SIGH for far-off lands,
A wish for solitudes,
A yearning for the lonely sands
Where Mirage broods.

So doth Desire breed in the hearts
Of men, within the marts,
The old-time savage hope
For earth's unfettered scope.

EXILES

UNDER the drowsy sunshine hot,
Close to the brink in a quiet spot;
Watching the drops of the fountain fall,
Pressing the verge of the marble wall;
Covered with dust and the passer's scorn —
Dreaming of home — with an air forlorn —
What was the fate that stranded him there,
An Arab boy, in the city square?

Deep in the pool, like a magic glass,
Towers and minarets fade and flash;
Shadows that curl and coil the while,
Fashion the sacred crocodile.
Often a passing newsboy's cry
Seemed like the muezzin's call on high;
Still for a loving glance or gleam,
He sought in vain, in his troubled dream.

But lo! When the wind, with a sudden leap
And a flirt of spray and a fragrance deep,
Swept to his ear the sigh of a leaf,
He roused with a start, and forgot his grief;
For, nodding its head 'neath the fountain's drip,
A cool caress on its languid lip —
A pale Nile Lotus looked up with joy,
And wafted a kiss to the Arab boy.

THE SORCERY OF EYES

WHAT subtle spell, my Mary,
Doth so inform thine eyes,
That mingle in their liquid depths
 All dreams and sorceries,
And e'en as well, supernal glows
 Like those of evening skies,
Which, tho' the orb of day has fled,
 Blush still of Paradise.

But oft' I see my Mary,
 Within thine eyes some hint
As of a quiet, cool, green glade,
 Wherein a sunbeam's glint
Shows traceries of fern and vine
 And violet and mint,
With shy, sweet buds entwined in
 Of rich and varied tint.

And once I thought, my Mary,
 Thy glance was like the spray
The wind caught from the fountain's clasp
 And flung in sparks away,
Where never once returned the gleam
 That lured the zephyr's play
Of sun-ekindled burning glows
 In all that livelong day.

But once I thought, my Mary,
I saw within those deeps
Thy soul swim like the mirrored star
That nightly vigil keeps
Within the bosom of some tarn
Far up the Alpine steeps,
Where to the kiss of winged winds,
Its image laughs and leaps.

And oft thine eyes, my Mary,
I can not read aright,
For fancies sometimes hover there
Unfathomable as night;
And startle like the rushing wings
Of unseen birds in flight,
Past some intrepid wanderer
Upon some ghostly height.

LOVE THE MAGICIAN

SING bird, ripple rill —
Purple is the distant hill.
Sky is bright, and day is clear —
Love is here.
Frown sky, vanish hill —
Mute the bird and dry the rill.
All the day is drear and dead —
Love is fled.

THE WIND'S WOOING

I AM the wind, my lady flower,
That love thee;
I am the wind, thy charms endower
To love thee.
I, in these green-walled rooms
And fading glooms,
Have watched and waited full an hour
Above thee.

There are no mists about thy bower
To chill thee;
There are no frosts, my lady flower,
To kill thee;
I've blown them all away.
No pale star ray
Has pierced thy tall, leaf-windowed tower
To thrill thee.

Here are the dews, my sleeping queen,
In jewelled masses —
The dews I've wafted through the screen
Of latticed grasses.
Sweet, touch them to your lip,
And nectar sip;
See, — in them glows the day-dawn's sheen,
Caught as it passes.

Love, here are perfumes rare and faint
From dusky dells;
From whence the nightingale's complaint,
Now sobs and swells.
All these I've gathered late
Where shadows sit in state,
And hold the day in long restraint
With magic spells.

But now the East is all aflush
With pleasure,
The morn itself hath caught thy blush,
My treasure.
Awake! Awake! My sweet,
Your eyes shall greet
Such love as thou cans't never hush
Nor measure.

Loud wind thy horns, morn's warders wind,
Set echo flying;
And so from slumber deep unbind
My sweet Rose sighing;
And when soft strains swell clear,
She shall not fear,
If in my loving clasp, entwined,
She's lying.

RED CLOVER

CLOVER red, I love full well
Thy rich dyes and honey-smell;
When in fragrant meadows floating up
 All thy million blossoms swim;
 Sun-kissed foam at Summer's brim,
Bubbling, efflorescent o'er her cup.

What rich influence fashioned thee,
Ruddy paramour of the bee?
Sun and wind and rain and teeming soil,
 Yielding many a rarer flower,
 Loftier grace and daintier dower,
Scattered thee in plenteous sweet turmoil.

Like a galleon of Spain,
Tossest thou upon this main;
Tempting many a winged, swift corsair;
 Ravished of thy secret store,
 Wilt thou sink and sail no more,
Reft of most that made thee fond and fair?

Oft a salver, damask spread,
On which slender flagons, fed
Full of pale, pellucid, nectared dew,
 Seemest thou, and bees thy guests;
 Buzzing blades in steely vests;
Quenching here a thirst forever new.

Or a rustic lass, aglow
With what bloom they may not know—
(Lillies, langourous ladies of the town)
 Cherry-cheeked and downy-lipped,
 Art thou till thy stalk is nipped,
Crushed, or wasted by what ruthless clown.

Clown! Alas, yon browsing flock,
Makes of all my strains a mock!
Now I know not if thou art a flower;
 So perchance, thou art but grass;
 Food for common things, alas!
Sport of nature in a frugal hour.

Yet withal, my heart will swell,
Clover dear, at thy sweet spell:
Charming me again to childhood's hour,
 When I bathed long noons in thee;
 Stealing surcease with the bee,
Swept away in dreams by fairy power.

MIMIC WORLDS BELOW

WHAT a world is down below,
Where the greening currents flow;
Where the tides of verdure sweep
In the murmurous summer deep.
Where small nations come, and keep
Empire down below.

O, the fine and famous life
In these depths is rolling rife;
O, the splendor and the power!
From what ark within an hour,
Deluged by a passing shower,
Leaps so rich a life!

Every minute grows an age,
In which woes and wars will wage;
Every day, e're light is spent,
Marks a world's long parliament;
In a second's wide content,
Youth fades into age.

Kings may rule, within the cup
Some tall flower lifteth up.
In the pool my step will span,
Sail such fleets,—bold seamen man,
Other continents to scan,—
Were oceaned in a cup.

What brave sights of mountains high,
 Mirror in the insect eye!
Temples grand, that reach the sun;
 Monsters mystical, that run
Down long ways, small folk should shun.
 All is vast and high.

Every spire of grass must be
 Crested with infinity;
Every clod and every stone,
 Boundaries of some new zone.
Where beyond are worlds unknown,—
 — Unknown still to be.

Tell me, then, if thou cans't know,
 Citizens of down below,
Hast thou of the sky and air—
 Stretching endless everywhere—
World and Time, a ceaseless share,
 Thou, perchance, cans't know.

ORACLES

THROUGH Asian forests dim and dread
 Interminable and chill
I sought above a torrent's bed
 A temple on a hill.
And there I asked disciples twelve
 Beleaguered, blind and lame
“ What word have ye from out the maze,
 What name or sign of ancient days
 To guide the human will? ”
“ Go search,” they groaned, “ and dig and delve.
 We dare not name the Name.”

I found a genius erudite
 Who knew ten thousand tomes;
He brought deep mysteries to light,
 And talked with elves and gnomes.
No hidden word of seer or sage
 Or fiend or foul afreet
Eluded him in ruined crypts
 Where rot long buried manuscripts
 And reptiles have their homes.
“ Tell me the word, O mighty mage,”
 He leered, “ Search Holy Writ.”

Through mart and temple, palace den,
 Amid the city's roar
I sought amongst a million men
 The Chemist's latest lore;
And found an oracle on high
 Who probed all mysteries —
And plucked from radiant ores their rays
 And all the stuff of world's assays
 Corpuscular at core —
“ A Stress in Ether,” was his cry
 “ Tells all the clue there is.”

Where buttercups and butterflies
And many a homing bee
Reflected joyance in his eyes
A child danced unto me—
He seemed a floweret springing there
Fresh from the teeming sod.
“Of such are angels saith the Lord”
And so I sat him on the sward
To solve the mystery—
“Who made thee, child?” I questioned fair.
And swift he answered “God.”

In rymes and runes in fretted fanes,
In alchemies and scrolls,
In necromancies, witches’ skenes,
In Prophets’ cries or Trolls’,—
What name, what sign doth succor men
By Satan’s fiends beguiled?
One Name, One Name within my breast
Doth answer to the ancient quest!
Avaunt ye doctors blind as moles;
That Name beyond the sages’ ken
Transfigures in the child.

Go tell it to the Fisher Folk,
To Toilers in the field,
To all who strain beneath the yoke,
To all who yearn or yield.
No priest shall ban, no creed bestow
That Name within my soul.
’Tis not without, beyond, afar
But like a mystic mirrored star,
Each heart It giveth grace to glow
And lighteth to its goal.

A VOICE OF NIGHT

HARK! Far up above, a note,
Wandering wierdly, seems to float
Strangely spectral, hollow, high—
Voice of Winter's night and sky.

In the black abyss of night
'Tis some traveler taking flight
Southward, to those shining sands,
Where sweet Summer beckoning stands.

Giant beacons far below—
Cities with a mighty glow—
Streams of glass and lakes of steel,
Swift beneath him wind and wheel.

Mariner of untracked seas,
Still no compass as he flees
Needs he in uncharted space,
Whither he has set his face.

Yet his cry from out the dark
'Frights me; now 'tis fainter—hark!
Is it warning, wild goose gray?
Good or evil omen, pray?

TO A THRUSH

SAID I: "Bird upon yon bough,
Why in rapture singest thou?
Every clear and throbbing note
On the air doth faint and float
Passionately from thy throat,
Like a voice inspired!"

"What hast thou within thy ken?
Sky and field, and haunts of men,
Yet the sky may frown and blast,
Grass and flowers will not last —
And from sinful man thou hast
Naught but snares and hurt.

"Danger lurks for thee in wait
Everywhere; and only fate,
By sweet chance, may keep thee free,
Give thee time for melody!
Blithe, content, and happily
Time to love and mate.

"What a little thing may crush
Thy weak frame, impassioned thrush;
'Gainst what stroke hast thou a shield,
Friend or fortress in what field,
What defence, save wings to wield;
Then how cans't thou sing?"

Clear and high came back the song:

“ June is here, and sunshine long,
Winds are sweet and fields are bright,
Calm is noon and safe the night;
While is nothing now to fright,
Sing and nest will I.

“ ’Tis enough that I shouldst be
Made for love and minstrelsy;
This is all I know or care —
All my life a soaring prayer.
Chance may crush, or fate may spare,
Still I needs must sing.”

THE GATES OF DAY

O GATES of Day,
Whose folds of brass
Flash in the cliffs of Morn and Eve!
Who built thee, pray,
And who can pass?
Where are the Titan warders bold,
And where the hands, long ages old,
Here paused to hew and cleave;
And where abides the King of Night,
Who ushers out the Sun,
And locks the world against his light,
When Day is done?

IN JACK-O-LANTERN TIME

WHEN the corn is tall and rank,
Ready then for out-door prank,
Whistling blithely as he goes,
What brown country-lad, but knows
Where the golden pumpkins grow;
Scattered thick along the row,
For making Jack-o-lanterns!

In the cool and welcome shade
That the stalwart stalks have made,
None can spy, and none can tell
By what hand, or with what spell,
Grows the grawsome, trunkless head —
Sorry mask of demons dread —
The phantom Jack-o-lantern.

With the dusk that shuts down late,
Shines this grinning freak of fate;
Nose of fire, and coals for eyes,
Mouth a flaming gash — it tries
Stoutest hearts to see behind,
Glowing fitful in the wind,
The face of Jack-o-lantern!

Candle-lighted goblin, you
Bring old summer-times anew.
Then I, too, sat in the corn,
With my jack-knife, to adorn
Pumpkin heads with features queer;
Would that I were back — in dear
Jack-o-lantern time!

A GUARDIAN SPIRE

A LOFTY spire 'tis mine to see
Athwart the blue immensity.
So near, its shadows, long and still,
Creep in upon my window sill;
By night, 'tis panelled there the same,
Betwixt the narrow window-frame,
A faithful guardian.

On rainy days his patient air
A lonely sentinel might wear,
Who pallid grows, yet at his post
Keeps guard before the sleeping host —
Not all the blasts against his breast
Endanger aught their trusting rest,
So brave and true is he.

"Tis other far, on sunny days;
His lofty form he then will raise
As mountain peaks are wont to do,
In joy, a cloudy chasm through.
With pomp and wealth within his walls,
While the great organ swells and falls,
He points aloft with might and main
And wears a look I know is vain —
A sad and sinful thing.

At christenings his mien will be
A picture of benignity;
A look of awe, with sorrow wed,
When prayers are chanted for the dead;
An air of gladness, mixed with pride,
When casting blessings o'er a bride,
I can discover there.

At twilight, with his vestments hid,
The lowlier roofs he stands amid
Seem hallowed with an angel's care,
And whispered voice of vesper prayer.
My chamber's dim uncertainty
I peer from out, and then I see
His eye is turned to God.

CAPTAINS OF THE CORN

IN the cornfields, row on row,
Marshalled in a stately show,
Clad in green and plumed with red,
Spears at rest, and overhead
Banners waving in the sky —
Shining silken pennants fly, —
Bravest warriors of the year,
Autumn's here.

I WOULD GO AT DEEP OF NIGHT

IN the winding wind-voiced arches,
Slumbrous aisles of gloomy larches,
I would go at deep of night.
 Reveller in all strange affright;
Feed me with what nameless dread,
 Swift on midnight's chime is spread.

Seek for haunting fear to quicken
 All my soul, till wan and stricken,
All the blood should spurn the heart,
 At each insect's murmer start;
Quake at every moaning wind,
 Tremble, blanch and peer behind.

Strain to hear the awful stirring
 Of each leaf, while terror spurring,
Rings each pulse-beat like a bell,
 Tolling endlessly a knell;
Watch each wavering moon-fed ray
 Dance and flit, ghost-wise away.

Shudder at each cricket's shrilling,
Panic horror through me thrilling;
Of each dew-drop at my lip,
Tasting murder's horrid drip;
At each firefly's gleaming lamp,
Start, as from some robber's camp.

So should I drink in intense
Meeds of ghastly, grim suspense;
Thus to Night in truth belong—
Brother to her phantom throng.
Filch from frenzy and from fear,
Anguish that can know no tear.

SEA TRAGEDIES

“O CAPTAIN, pray what of the night,
The wind is loud, the sea runs high?”
Black as a demon’s wing the sky,
Pale was the captain’s face and white.

“The ship is staunch as aught afloat,
‘Tis but a bit of storm,” he said,
“And a trifle cloudy overhead.”
With that his voice died in his throat.

“O Captain, tell us where is land?”
The reefs, sown thick in that dread sea,
Gave horrid answer on the lee;
His form shook like a willow wand.

“O, we make port at morning light!”
At length he gasped and turned away
As might a man who longed to pray,
With Death abroad in that black night.

“O Captain, what is that dread cry?”
A wolfish scream shrilled out ahead!
Alas! The dawn broke on the dead.
Above the shrieking sea-birds fly.

BOYHOOD'S BOAT

LITTLE boat on yonder shelf,
Dry-docked by a vanished self,
Thy last cruise is o'er and spent
All the breezes small lips sent,
Wafting thee
Across the sea.

Waste of water in a tub,
'Gainst whose slanting shores would rub
Painted prows that sailed from Spain —
Such was once thy stormy main.
Shattered now
That painted prow.

All that sea is drained and dry —
Cargo lost and skipper — why,
'Tis a cause that I should'st weep,
That of boyhood, still I keep
Just a boat —
That will not float.

TO A SPANISH GIRL

SWEETHEART, whence hast thou thine eyes,
So suffused with fire,
That is like the glows that rise
Over morning's pyre?

This thy cheek, that dusky glows
Olive as the skies,
Bending o'er a tropic rose,
Matches with thine eyes.

And that lip! O how shall I,
Little versed in sweets,
Tell of what I may but sigh,
Since it never greets?

Other stars and other climes
Wove so rich a spell
O'er thy natal hour, that rhymes
Scarce suffice to tell.

Thou should'st wed a mighty don,
Or a grandee great;
Still will I, a lute upon,
Woo thee for my mate.

IN THE ROSE GARDEN OF THE KING

IN the rose garden of the king,
Mid fountains, marble-walled,
A maiden sighed, and oft' would sing
A song of Love enthralled;
"My heart is but a worthless thing,
If I have not a true love ring.

"My father sits in his high hall,
And bids his lords attend;
An hundred chieftains, in his thrall,
Beneath his summons bend.
But what care I for rank and state,
So I have not my dear heart's mate?

"I've wealth of gold and gems of price
Beyond the wildest dream;
And from their scabbards, in a trice
For me, true blades will gleam;
But what can please, or do my will,
If so that love be starved still?

"Then set my lover on his steed,
And burst his fetters free;
Give gold and gems to those that need,
But give his life to me.
What if he be my father's foe?
I little care, who love him so."

Hard by there was a little grot,
 Half hid with eglantine,
And from that sweet and hidden spot
 The king's fool saw her pine;
Whose plaint had pierced with bitter sting,
 The heart of that mis-shapen thing.

For love hath oft a random dart,
 For wounding such as he:
Who, paining with his hurt, doth start
 And watching narrowly,
So fled past her averted eye
 As one who of his wound shall die.

E'en as he sped, a trumpet shrill
 A dreadful warning gave;
Whose blasts with wild misgivings, fill
 The bravest of the brave;
For all the court, with bated breath,
 Grew fearsome at its note of death.

But scarce the hush of silence fell,
 Than swift as bird on wing,
There knelt — where sways its awful spell
 The sceptre of the king —
His fool, whose wit could oft attune
 The monarch's heart, and win his boon.

In sorry guise, with cap and bells,
 In motley, garish wild;
And tortured with his woe, he tells
 A tale, the king beguiled,
Of one who wails and waits forlorn,
 Unto her father's foe forsworn.

So sobbed, so sighed its woe divine,
 Whose every word a tear,—
A holy deed, it seemed, would shine
 For him who gave it ear.
And anguish dread, as love in vain,
 For him who would not spare its pain.

Then rose the king, and bade them bring
 The captive from his cell,
And plighted them. And none shall ring
 Her gallant lover's knell;
Full soon a joyous wedding chime
 Shall praise the poor fool's moving rhyme.

But in their measured watches, when
 The armed warders grim,
By westward scarp, peer down again
 The castle's rocky rim—
Where one who leaps may life escape—
 They halt — with horror long agape.

LIFE

WHAT is life? The meteor's flight
Blazed across the black of night.

What is youth? The flush of dawn;
Glance upon it — it is gone.

Manhood's but a lusty shout
In the silence all about.

Age — The frost upon the grass;
Death, like winter, comes — alas!

All the pure, serene content,
Lies beyond, when life is spent.

'XMAS HOLLY

HOLLY bough, thy red and green
Waving o'er a wide demesne,
Holdeth swift and magic sway
On a day — priceless day —
When thy sign upon the wall
Bids the world to festival.

A THRENODY OF LOVE AND DEATH

HIGH fame and deeds are not of sun-spanned days,
Or langorous, vine-kissed ecstasy of brain;
And love, true love, oft yearns within the maze
To garner gleams of hope and life in vain,
And truest love may win the ways of pain."

So sang the harper plucking at his strings,
And evening winds above the castle wall
Bore down his song on blossom-scented wings,
To whoso listening there it might befall;
And one there was, a valiant knight, and tall.

And one a maiden,— fair as gloaming mists
That rise moon-broidered on the streams, was she —
And to her tender heart, e'en as she lists,
The song foretold of sorrow; plaint and plea
Of nameless dread, and dread eternity.

Beyond in sunset's glow on Saxon streams,
The knight far-followed with a dreamy eye
The shining slopes and winding water-gleams,
And saw such phantoms as at midnight fly,
And visions as of men fore-doomed to die.

Scarce but an hour agone, aghast there came,
With shrilling cries, the couriers, spent and wan,
With word of ravage, torture, sword and flame,
Beyond the border swiftly spurring on;
The scourge and horde from Dneiper and the Don.

“Who rides, who checks the vanguard at the ford,
Shall foremost be of knights, and ever dear.”
So aware the Prince, and pledged, upon his sword,
Sweet honors unto whoso spurneth fear,
And his request — whatever it might appear.

Then baron, lord and knight, in gloomy haste,
Forth issued from the vaulted council hall;
That each of his own hope or fear should taste,
As who on such a quest should venture all;
And one alone mused by the courtyard wall.

Too lowly he, and lacking gold and lands,
And rich in naught but knightly grace and love;
Yet daring not to reach to those sweet hands,
So dear, so rare, and yet so high above.
Yet hope now spread its pinions like a dove.

“Lift up your eyes, all ye who dream in life,
Lift up your eyes, and gaze upon a star.”
So sang the harper. “Love is kin to strife,
And who loves best, loves ever from afar;
The rose’s fragrance fades within the jar.”

Wheréat a pale white rose, with early dews
Scarce moistening the blush upon its lips,
Fell softly down; so hardly did it lose
The pressure of those tender finger tips,
And down the emerald latticed ivy slips.

Sweet as a prayer from maiden soul it fell.
A swift caress in passing on his cheek,
It brought the knight, so roused him from his spell,
And drew his upturned gaze that face to seek,—
He long had worshipped, fearing aught to speak.

“Dear star,” he whispered, “this sweet guerdon, I
Will wear upon a quest by honor bid,
And if by thrust, or shock, or flame to die,
‘Twill speak the hope within my heart long hid,
And be my talisman this strife amid.”

And still the harper’s song ran on alway,
“The night is long, and long indeed is death;
Who rides to battle needs should pause and pray.
Love yearns for life — ‘tis but a passing breath —
But fame undying, all men honoreth.”

⋮ ⋮ ⋮

Black plume, red banner, gilded mail and crest
Flashed through the gloom, and riding at their head,
The lowly knight gave voice to one behest
To bold retainers, by his valor sped,
“Bring back the rose, should I lie with the dead.

That night long waged with arrow, sword and spear,
And arquebus and javelin, swayed the fight,
And crimson ran the flood along the wier
With heart-ebbed tides of heathen and of knight;
And timid Dawn came weeping at the sight.

Yet back was rolled from sunny Saxon streams,
The wild invaders' flood of scourge and flame.
But still the maiden murmurs in her dreams
Of one who vowed and perished without blame,
And ne'er returned — her father's gift to claim.

And still the harper plucks upon his strings,
And sings of fleeting love and deathless fame.
“Ah! Love! A pale white rose for guerdon brings,
Yet on a pulseless heart it crimsoned came,
But honor bides forever in a name.”

L' ENVOI

All excellence, and dignity, and worth —
All, all of priceless deeds and golden aims
May have of love and dreamy days a dearth,
But where the torch of stress and sorrow flames
Is writ the roll of deathless deeds and names.

IS LOVE PRAYER?

O LORD, did'st Thou not say
"In secret pray?"
Then why the ceaseless whine
From every Christian shrine,
Of those who stand and pray for all
And loudly, sadly call?

Art Thou unheeding then;
And far from men?
Forever lost in void—
In mystery overjoyed?
Or was't Thy meaning plain to see
Each one should'st live to Thee?

Thy law of Love is plain,
And yet in vain
Shall we of Christian virtue, prate,
While we forever hate.
O Lord, why shouldst we pray
If all, love all, alway?

WARNER'S LAKE

IN distant lands I've wandered far
And sweet the wide world seems;
Yet Warner's Lake is calling me —
I see it in my dreams.
Thy purple hills, thy sheltered nooks,
Thy shadowed, laughing streams —
And O, thy upland meadows wide,
How sweet their fragrance seems!

I love the City's mighty din,
I love the ocean's roar;
But thou bright lake, art calling me .
Back to thy sunny shore!
How oft thy ripples at my lip
My childhood's thirst would slake!
I'll wander back where'er I roam
To thee dear sylvan lake!

Gleam on amid thy whispering pines,
As sapphire as thy skies;
And if by shadows thou art swept,
Those shadows will I prize.
It's true to thee I'll ever be,
Whatever storms may break,
And wander back, what'er betide,
To thee dear distant lake.

Chorus:

We sing to thee dear Warner's Lake,
Dear Warner's Lake to thee;
We'll fill the cup
With crystal up
And drink to Warner's Lake.

MEMORIAL DAY

BESIDE the graves upon the hill
They gather in a feeble line.
'Tis "Howdy, Joe"; "How are you Bill?"
The Shattered Oak; The Blasted Pine;
Stern, grizzled men; at Shiloh they
Were foremost in the battle fray.

And some across the mounds will greet,
Who marched with Sherman to the sea;
And some at Vicksburg with the fleet
Greet Sumter's heroes lovingly;
And some at Gettysburg have been,
Or Southern Prison Pen within.

Reunion Day, one might have said—
For those still left above the sod;
Memorial Day — but for the dead,
Who fought for freedom and for God.
Yet as the Maytimes come and go
No army makes so brave a show.

School children, wondering, gather there
And watch the tattered standards sway.
To fife and drum, with martial air,
They marched behind along the way,
And help with blossoms deck the dead,
While every Veteran bows his head.

One sturdy lad of valiant race
Looked up unto his grandsire there,
And spoke the wonder in his face,
The while the chaplain ceased his prayer;
"Who'll guard our land, grandfather, when
We have no more Grand Army men?"

"My lad," the Veteran slowly said;
Peace hath more victories than war.
The nation's line of heroes dead
Are mightier than the living, far;
And we who fought in life for Peace,
In death to guard it shall not cease."

UNSUNDERED

A BRANCH I took from the forest path —
What is a stick of wood?
No ear, no eye, no soul it hath,
Naught of Joy and naught of wrath;
Naught of evil, nor good.
And I broke the branch in pieces two,
Two broken bits of an ancient yew.

And as I trod the forest way —
Strange is the human heart! —
I would not cast the parts away,
What thoughts were mine I cannot say,
But the twain I would not part.
So I buried them deep in the mossy mould,
Where none shall sunder thro' years untold.

REGRETS

IF I ever fail to be
Closely mindful friend of thee,
Take it not unkindly pray,
 Set it down to storm or stress,
 Ills or cares that rudely press
On a vexing day.

'Twas but yesternight I woke
After midnight's chiming broke
All the solemn stillness clear—
 Felt regret come winging hot
 That, but lately, I forgot
A token for you dear.

So shall this, then plead for me,—
That in dreams the minstrelsy
Of my heart, seeks one rare chord—
 That on waking still rings true
 With some anxious thought of you,
Keen as any sword.

THE WANDERER

OLD Margaret dwelt upon the hill,
 Above the village green;
And through the winter's bitter chill,
 And through the summer's sheen,
She wends her ways, aloof, alone,
Without a sigh, without a moan,
 Awaiting there God's will.

Old Margaret's son sailed over sea
 So long, so long ago!
And where he bides is mystery
 That brings its daily woe.
But on the hearth she keeps his chair—
His room is garnished fresh and fair—
 She feels that he must know.

The village children often climb
 The pathway to her cot,
And in the golden summertime
 It is a pretty spot
With flowers climbing all about,
Where once he played with happy shout,
 In games so long forgot.

And many a juicy apple red,
 And many a toothsome cake,
She keeps for some small curly-head
 That he was wont to take.
And every day, in rain or shine,
She thinks he'll come across the brine
 To ease her long heart-ache.

Who is that stranger, tall and fair,
Goes striding up the street?
See, see the children thronging there,
With restless, dancing feet.
Behold, as evening gathers chill,
How swiftly now he mounts the hill —
Who goes he there to greet?

MAGGIE'S MILKING CALL

WHEN twilight shadows eastward crawl,
And rosy clouds like fleecy yarn
Adown the western sky-lands fall,
When crickets shrill about the barn,
And field mice rustle in the mows;
'Tis then I hear the milking call,
"Here Shep! Here Shep! Here Shep!"
"Bring home the cows!"

Across the hilly pasture lot
Old Brindle browses at the gate,
And Mulley, Bess, Crump Horn and Spot
Lift up their heads and mutely wait,
While all the woodland echoes rouse,
And long repeat the distant call,
"Here Shep! Here Shep! Here Shep!"
"Bring home the cows!"

The twittering swallows in the eaves
With noisy chatter seek their nests,
The tree-toads murmur in the leaves,
And whip-poor-wills call love's requests.
The wood-thrush pipes his parting vows,
Unmindful of the ringing call—
“Here Shep! Here Shep! Here Shep!”
“Bring home the cows!”

Now tripping blithely down the path
Comes Maggie with the milking pail.
What comely looks the maiden hath,
How sweet and cheery is the hail
She chants amid the orchard boughs!
“Here Shep! Here Shep! Here Shep!”
“Fetch home the cows!”

No mincing maid in silken gown
Is half so nice as Maggie is;
No soaring songstress of the town
Disports such pleasing melodies,
As she with sylvan charm endows
That simple, quavering milking call—
“Here Shep! Here Shep! Here Shep!”
“Bring home the cows!”

THE HIDDEN USE

WHEN I think upon the pearl,
 Hidden in the tropic sea,
Where the fecund currents whirl
 In a tangled mystery.
Then I know some fisher brown
Seeks it there and diving down,
 Shall set it free.

On the Alpine precipice,
 Bathed in tender morning glows,
There I know the Eidelweiss
 Lost in solemn silence blows.
Yet the chamois hunters dare,
Seek the lonely blossom there
 Above the snows.

When that planet burns on high,
 Triple-ringed with radiant light,
There I know some watcher's eye
 Seeks its secret through the night,
As it circles to and fro —
Some vast truth must Saturn show
 Within the sky.

Nothing ever hidden is,
Great or small, of good repute;
 Fate hath secret embassies
For the rare and involute.
Search the sea and pierce the sky —
Go where only eagles fly —
 Beauty is not mute.

When misfortune grants no truce
To our dearest hopes and dreams,
Let us question not its use,
Seek the Ancient light that streams
Through the planet, pearl and flower,
Each with its appointed hour
Glows or gleams.

Every lofty thought or deed,
Every wish for higher things,
Hath its answering hour or need,
Sometime, somewhere Rescue wings
Gracious flight unto that heart,
Dumb with some unuttered art,
And lo! It sings.

FAIR ATHOSTON OF DREAMS

THY Judges sign, thy Captains dare,
Thy Rulers don the purple robe;
The common herd come forth to fare
Both up and down about the globe.
But what of aims and what of speech,
That shall the dim far future teach?
Fair Athoston of Dreams!

The ships come to thy water gates —
Thy freighted Fleets sail forth to sea.
And from thy Halls the Law abates
Some Ills, and others fashions free.
Yet Destiny sets here a sign —
Is it of woe, or Word benign?
Fair Athoston of Dreams!

Full purposeful, thy Mighty Men
Have graven deep in Sordid Stone,
Great maxims ten — Aye ten times ten —
And massed the Spoil of Blood and Bone.
Yet vague and fitful blaze the lights
Of Glory o'er thy sullied heights,
Fair Athoston of Dreams!

Of all the Years, an After-Glow —
A fleeting memory of Deeds —
Above thy name may fade or flow;
Where-of the fame or fashion speeds
To what Good End, who shall declare?
Or to what purpose spur or spare?
Fair Athoston of Dreams!

If Thou of Bard or Bishop get
A burning prophecy of Light,
Wilt Thou in vileness still abet
The lawless ravages of Might?
Shall ever Vision, high and true,
Survive, suffice and soar with you
Fair Athoston of Dreams!

NEMESIS

IS there no pain, unstifled in the flight
Of long, thought-stealing, troubled, vexing years,
Of mingled gloom and frequent sunshine bright,
 Mirth-making madness, or heart draining tears?
The many patterened woof, wherein is sped
 The busy shuttle of the weaving Fate,
That turns our lives to fabrics mixt with love
 Or who doth sadly wed
The dark and gloomy phantesies of hate,
 With pictures soft of visions from above.

Is there no hope to dull the keen knife thrust
 Of those black errors in the mounting blood?
Of passion spurred and swift out-leaping lust,
 Or envy prompted stroke, to one who stood
Close shouldered in the wild and rushing fray?
 Helplessness and friendship robbed of hope,
Shall memory of these waked into pain
 Unbanished, stab and stay?
And may time never unassisted cope
 With such a dread and blot it out again?

Where grows the balm to soothe the tortured brow?
 At aching night, or in the fevered dream
Of waking reverie. Ah tell me how—
 All else of sorrow buried in the stream,
That sweet repentance sends the weary soul—
 To wash out all the stains of cruel deeds,
That made another's hurt, and unatoned
 In long reaction roll
Upon new lives. My heart with pity bleeds
 For what in useless age is long bemoaned.

WHAT FATE HATH HID

AH, do we gain in dreaming
 The dreams of fleeting days?
Is there no sunshine streaming
 Beyond, to wiser ways?
We pain to know if living
 Hath not the boon of giving
 New paths within the maze.

There is the same light laughter,
 There are the same slow tears;
The old-time hopes and after
 And o'er them all the fears;
The loving and the leaving,
 The dread of long deceiving,
 The drag of dying years.

O when will all be clearer,
 With light from kindly stars!
With Heaven bending nearer,
 And error bound with bars!
O God, for one word certain;
 One glimpse beyond the curtain,
 And Death that nocks and mars!

ON THE HEIGHTS

FAR above on purple heights,
 Sky of blue, or starry bright,
Keen transcendent, all delights,—
 Golden day, and gemmy night;
There my fancies ride and roam,
 Far above life's monochrome.

In the valleys far below,
 Sweet beside the tardy stream,
Life in pulchritude may flow
 'Twixt the shadow and the gleam;
Still lark-high my spirit wings,
 Where the tumbling torrent sings.

Craggy nook and rocky den,
 Where the tempest-riven tree
Hangs and hides from mortal ken;
 There it is I'd fly with thee,
Snatch such joy as eagles know,
 So to live, or perish so.

THE UNWRITTEN MARCH

THREE is a march, unwritten yet, unwritten long per-
chance to be;
'Tis shrilling, thrilling, thundering vaguely down the
ways;
The ways where strife and sadness sway, whose tongues
demand of Nations free
Demand the theme, the notes, the words — the March
of Days,
The March of Days to come, and Days of Right,
Ineffable, adorable — of Right.

I would that march, unwritten yet, God's pity now should
give to be;
A sonorous, clamorous paean; music-welded words;
And that the Peoples singing it, and singing long, the Bold,
the Free,
Should fling the strains abroad, where'er the lightening
girds,
To steel the Hand of Effort, Soul of Might,
Majestical, resistless Soul of Might.

I hear that march, 'tis blaring now, 'tis drumming now at
morning's gleam,
'Tis clanging, booming, trampling through the notes of
war.
A mighty roar, a deafening call, a cry as from an awful
dream!
To King and Captain, armies, men; a shout of Thor!
A wail of all the heathen gods agone;
The savage, reckless heathen gods agone.

I hear that march, 'tis trumpeting, 'tis crackling now in
trenches vile,

With neighing, yelling chords; with misererie rife.
A cry of storms, blood-sorrowing, blood-drinking sands, the
blazing pile,

Deep diaphason dread of shattered human lives;
The wierd of warfare's gory, ghastly ghouls,
The grinning, gristly, ghastly battle ghouls.

From mines, from cells, long dungeoning, foul tenementing
souls' abodes,

Where slaving, threshing, grinding, hold their sway of
men,

I hear that March, unwritten yet, yet voicing Mercy's master
modes

For teaching Earth, the strains shall sway the rythmic
When.

The rythmic When, Creation's master hour.

The golden, glowing, holy, human hour.

I hear that March, go pealing up, go chiming up thro' time
and space,

The bugle note of Peace, the clarion call of Hope;
The shout of joy, the laugh of love, the strain of bliss in
every clime;

An ocean-clamoring melody, unfathomable of scope,
With this one tortured, fevered, minor chord,

The hideous Past's remonstrant, minor chord.

I would the Turk, the Muscovite, the Saxon, Slav, the Mongal
Race,

The Latin, Teuton, Celt, the Black and Savage Tribes,
Should swell the strains 'flung heavenward, where God hath
hid his hand and face,

And drown this chord of stress, of murder, blows and
bribes,

That swells the awful volume of that March;
Reverberating, world compelling March.

Alas! that March, unwritten yet, what mind, what voice,
what tongue shall give,

Shall give in Angel's speech to music of the spheres!
To soar as soars the song of birds, wherever God gives leave
to live —

World blest the hour its majesty appears,
To shake the Earth with one glad rythmed tread —
The Happy World's heroic, rythmed tread.

DESTINY

I LOOKED into the Orient;
I looked into the West;
I questioned Fate's behest,
Full anguished in my quest
For Prophet masterful and free,
To cleanse from shame and Sorcery —
A Time Span, long misspent.

That night, beneath the Arctic Pole,
There sailed a swarthy King;
He bore a mystic Ring;
His ship flew wing on wing.

The Call came also unto me, —
I leaped into my saddle free,
And hastened to the Goal.

To-day, we met upon the Sand,
Far on a Tropic Shore;
Whose golden, gleaming ore
The Moon-tides long foreswore;
And there as Strangers, greeting, we
Began to kindle, high and free,
God's beacons, through the Land.

IN A WINTERGREEN DELL

IF dwelt but my love in a wintergreen dell,
How joyous and rare were the wooing;
With ferns, and with vines, and the modest harebell,
With fair scarlet berries and shy immortelle,
To crown her and wreath her I cherish so well,
How sweet and how sunny the suing!

The fluting of wood-thrushes far in the glade,
Fairy pipes plainting low for her pleasure,
Should echo within, where sun and where shade
Had thatched her cool bower; and whoso had strayed
By chance to that cover and seeing the maid,
Should envy but me and my treasure.

Of beech-nuts and berries, and wild-cherries red,
I'd furnish her banquet, and after
Bring nectar distilled where the humming-bird fed;
And when, in the Autumn, my darling I'd wed,
Of downy, green mosses we'd gather our bed;
And live but for loving and laughter.

WHAT LOVE IS

LOVE is like the sweetest flower,
 Ever wooed by wind or sun;
Plucked upon a passing hour,
 All its lovely life undone,
Swift its fragrance faints and flees.
 Fleeting triumph sad Love sees.

Like the tiger moth on wing,
 Love goes glinting in the sun,
Net the moth, poor captive thing,
 All its bloom is swiftly won;
Ravished by the softest touch—
 Poor hurt wing— Ah! Love is such.

Love gleams like the gem of dew
 Poised at morn upon the grass;
Seek it for a ring, and you
 Swift will see its splendor pass.
Nothing left of all its glows—
 Just a tear— it falls and flows.

Best is Love the grain of corn;
 From the husk the kernel pluck,
Sound and sweet as hearts forsworn,
 Talisman for lovers' luck.
Gold without, true heart within;
 This is best, what Love hath been.

PERFECT CITY

I HAVE a friend, a mighty man,—
Decadence he hath slain.
He takes a city vast in span
And sets it in a plain.
He builds it wondrous fair to see
And fills it full of minstrelsy.

Now when I saw the City built,—
Like sea-foam gleamed its walls—
I sighed, “How keep it free from guilt
Till Beauty, man entralls?”
“By Truth,” he said, “Brought down to earth
When my great City came to birth.”

“Who’ll pay the cost?” Vice Robber said,
And fearsome was his cry.
My kingly Builder reared his head,
Swift doom flashed in his eye;
“Damned Hound, the spoils you stole suffice
For me to build a Paradise!”

THE SCARLET CALL

WHITE man and Black man and Yellow man,—
Brown man and Red man of God,
What have ye preached that your fellow man
Is herded by hues of the sod?

Brown man and Yellow man and Red man,
White man and Black man in thrall,
Cunning, not color, girds Superman
To gyve up the earth in his sprawl.

Yellow man and Red man and Brown man,
And Black unto White man call—
“Earth ore may daub us a color ban
But Christ’s tide floods scarlet in all.”



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